

NND 969044

By QH Date 19/6/98

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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**Memorandum of Conversation**

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MAR 15 1971

DATE: March 8, 1971

SUBJECT: US-Somali Relations

✓ Somali Emb

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador Addou (Somalia)  
David D. Newsom, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs

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Ambassador Addou called at his request for a further private meeting with Mr. Newsom. Referring to their conversation of February 24 the Ambassador asked whether Mr. Newsom had had time to reflect on the Ambassador's proposal that the U.S. encourage Ethiopia to make a territorial adjustment in favor of Somalia.

Mr. Newsom replied that he had certainly reflected on their previous conversation. The question of the U.S. role in the territorial problems between Ethiopia and Somalia had long been an element in US-Somali relations. The U.S. did not believe that it was in a position to encourage any nation to give up territory and particularly a friendly nation such as Ethiopia. At the same time the U.S. recognized that a situation existed in the Horn of Africa where peoples traditionally had wandered back and forth across current political boundaries. Perhaps in such a situation the solution was not to try to redraw the boundaries but in effect to set aside the boundary question by establishing forms of regional cooperation. The U.S. had shown an interest previously, an interest shared by the World Bank and others, in the joint development of water resources in the Somalia-Ethiopia-Kenya area. Examples exist elsewhere in Africa where nations have successfully resolved frontier problems by regional economic cooperation. Current arrangements between Algeria and Morocco are of such a nature.

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AF: D. D. Newsom

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The Ambassador, without responding to this approach, emphasized that Somalia wants good relations with the U.S. but that it is difficult under present circumstances to find a way to improve current relations. The orientation of the Somali Government is naturally affected by economic assistance. The Soviet Union is prepared to provide aid to Somalia. The Somali Republic is therefore responsive to Soviet views on issues such as Uganda where the Somali stance, in part at least, reflects Soviet views.

Mr. Newsom said he was astonished to hear that the Somali Republic would be influenced on an African issue by pressures from an aid donor. In his time as Assistant Secretary Mr. Newsom said he could not recall any time at which the U.S. put pressure on an aid recipient on an African issue. He could not understand why the Somali Government claimed that the U.S. efforts to restrict shipping with North Vietnam, a matter of direct interest to the U.S., would be looked upon as a violation of Somali sovereignty whereas the Somali Government would permit the Soviets to influence their views on an African matter with which the Soviet Union has no relationship.

The U.S. wants good relations with the Somali Republic but it is difficult in such circumstances to see any real indication that this is shared by the Somali Republic. The initial actions of the present Somali Government in throwing out the Peace Corps, in expelling official Americans and in the treatment of private American citizens are not forgotten and certainly do not help the climate of relations either officially or in the private sector. Mr. Newsom acknowledged that Ambassador Addou had worked hard and courageously for good relations. For this reason Mr. Newsom regretted speaking so bluntly to him but it was important that he understand the situation as seen from Washington.

Ambassador Addou said that he understood the American feelings but that the cases mentioned were all in the past. The present government feels that the U.S. is not doing anything which was not agreed upon with the old government and therefore it has not shown any clear interest in the new government. Mr. Newsom emphasized that the decision to proceed with the Mogadiscio water project was made against some considerable reluctance in Washington after the revolution. Mr. Newsom was disappointed that there was so little acknowledgement by the Somali Government that such a step had been taken in the face of all the problems that existed. He said he also felt obliged to tell the Ambassador that the withdrawal of the ships from trade with North Vietnam would certainly improve the atmosphere but given other U.S. commitments the U.S. could make no promise on the resumption of any major bilateral program.

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Ambassador Addou said he realized the many problems that existed but he did hope that Mr. Newsom would continue with his plans to visit Mogadiscio. General Siad welcomes frank talk and a review of some of these aspects with him would be useful. Mr. Newsom said his current plan, although still tentative, was to visit Mogadiscio early in May. Ambassador Hadsel was so informing Foreign Minister Arteh.

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